



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## COLONIAL AND REVOLUTIONARY SOUTH CAROLINA.<sup>1</sup>

GEN. EDWARD MCCRADY, of the Charleston bar, has issued within the past four years three volumes, aggregating twenty-four hundred pages, on the history of South Carolina, from its settlement in 1670 to the end of the year 1780. The first of these volumes has been reviewed in this REVIEW (April, 1899); the last two are of even greater interest. The scope of this work being the story of a single State denies it the importance of a national history; yet in these volumes Mr. McCrady exhibits such qualities of method, truthfulness, and judgment as may be favorably mentioned with those of the best authors who have written upon the history of our country. We look forward to the fourth volume, in which he promises to complete the narrative of South Carolina in the Revolution.

The qualities that stamp Mr. McCrady as an admirable historian are those bestowed by nature and a long experience as a student and lawyer, rather than by the schools. In fact, the careful reader cannot fail to recognize that a few years' rigorous training under the masters of research and style would have added something to the thoroughness, and much to the charm, of one whom nature has well endowed for the writing of full and truthful history. Our author does himself injustice by neglecting some of the common means for facilitating the perusal of his text and indicating its contents. Who could imagine the inspiring story of the settlement of the Presbyterians in the Waxhaws from the bare heading, "Chapter XVII. 1755-56?" But it is fair to say that the

---

<sup>1</sup> "South Carolina under the Proprietary Government"—1670-1719. By Edward McCrady. 1897. The Macmillan Company, New York.

"South Carolina under the Royal Government"—1719-1776. Ditto. 1899.

"South Carolina in the Revolution"—1775-1780. Ditto. 1901. \$3.50 each.

second and third volumes are much better in these respects than volume one: style, arrangement, division, and sifting of material have been notably improved.

We have reason to believe that Mr. McCrady has modified his opinion respecting the topical method. We agree with him that doctorate dissertations from the universities are frequently open to severe criticism, in that their composers follow their single trail so narrowly as to catch a line of facts without any broad conception of their correlation with the great life of a people. It is doubtless true that many a young "doctor" produces a very neat thesis without being in the true sense a philosophic historian. This is to be laid at the doors of our system of university instruction, or of the particular subject on whom it is practiced, rather than held as a defect of the topical method, which, in wise hands, has its indispensable uses, as Mr. McCrady exemplifies so satisfactorily in his second volume. There is a delightful varying of the subject; the reader is drawn on with yearning for more as the author discourses, with the charm of simplicity and fullness of information, in short chapters upon such topics as the settlement of the back country, life on the frontier, professional education, social life of the wealthy, slavery, coming of the Scotch-Irish, foreign commerce, natural resources, and domestic trade. The topical method is necessary for some themes, whose elements are like particles of gold scattered through the rock, which have no value nor measure until collected into one mass.

We might have feared from the too strongly legal flavor of the first volume that the author was bound by a narrow professionalism; the excellent treatment of military matters and of social and economic life in the succeeding parts of the work dispels this impression.

Mr. McCrady's range of reading is large and his information profound. He is a scholar much in the old sense of the word. He has not lived among archives and documents until he has come to worship a "contemporary authority" or "manuscript sources" as things infallible. He has made liberal use of memoirs and other works by writers of the

times he treats; but he does so with self-reliance and a keen critical faculty. The work abounds in instances in which the author explodes extravagant statements, unfounded claims, and groundless traditions. Even the testimony of eyewitnesses must undergo his testing scrutiny. Evidence is examined as sharply, as thoroughly, as dispassionately, as in a court of justice. This critical and judicial faculty is admirably and valuably used in the history of the Revolution, with its contradictory reports, extravagant figures, envious charges, and partisan spirit.

In regard to the use of manuscript sources Mr. McCrady is peculiar. Unquestionably he could in many places have made his work more valuable by thorough use of the unprinted records in the State capitol. This is particularly true regarding the Stamp Act. On the other hand, he has used most serviceably some valuable papers in the hands of private persons and others, some of which no previous historian has exploited. His insight into the characters of certain leaders of the agitation prior to the Revolution, and his history of the war, have thus been greatly enriched.

Of prime importance is the ability and disposition of the historian to judge justly and tell the truth without color and fear. This is one of Mr. McCrady's marked characteristics. In his judgment of men he is austere. When he has, in the manner we easily recognize as the result of his training at the bar, reviewed all the facts, and gives his judgment of the actors, we read with a sense of satisfaction akin to that elicited by one of Marshall's cogent opinions from the bench.

But there is one instance in which we are bound to feel that prejudice has distorted Mr. McCrady's vision and patriotism has injured the historian. We refer to Chief Justice Charles Shinner. Grant that Shinner was morally wicked, violent, unfair, ignorant of law, a political menial imposed upon a high-toned people. A small man, thrown into the prominence he enjoyed solely by circumstances, this discredit to the bench rouses the reluctance of the historian so far that he must dignify this character with too

much attention. Shinner was Chief Justice of South Carolina from 1762 to 1768, his term thus including the Stamp Act agitation. It is his loyal conduct in those trying events that entitles him to consideration. Connivance on his part would have allowed legal business to continue, and have gone far to nullify the offensive law. Even Lieut. Gov. Bull, who was then in office, consented that vessels should pass out of port without stamped paper, upon their buying a permit for the amount the required stamps would have cost; and Lieut. Gov. Bull was as nobly loyal to his King as a Scotch Jacobin to the Pretender. Moreover, the Lieutenant Governor appointed at this crisis three native South Carolinians assistant judges under circumstances which indicated plainly that they would oppose the Chief Justice in the execution of this law. This is the only doubtful act in the administration of the Lieutenant Governor, whose other conduct at this time and whose whole life make conscious disloyalty on his part inconceivable. Perhaps he considered that the new judges would not be able to accomplish the object they desired, but that their appointment would appease the inflamed provincial mind. In this he failed. On the contrary, he put into operation forces which made powerfully for strengthening the self-confidence of the people and for increasing the potency of the popular element in the government.

No other official can stand with Shinner in his uncompromising fidelity in this matter, and none can compare with him in the fierce popular wrath he voluntarily incurred. "You are a very bad man, a very Vicar of Bray!" he exclaimed upon Clerk of Court Dougal Campbell, because he petitions the judges who sought to evade the act, that his heavy fine for disobeying their order to assist them in this might be lessened. Rather than hedge, Shinner forewent all participation in the fees of the court, even for the two months intervening between the receipt of informal news of the repeal and the arrival of official information; so that he was reduced to a French half crown and eighteen pence English silver. Upon all this every man to whom he owed a bill seemed to make a run upon him. "But,"

says he, "I would not plead the Stamp Act in abatement of their suit."

Defending a bad man is an ungrateful task, but such stubborn British loyalty in all times and places deserves its praise. Neither does Mr. McCrady offer any evidence to substantiate the opinion he expresses that Shinner was the author of the able opinion he read on the binding character of the Stamp Act—a paper by a writer of no dull parts.

Mr. McCrady's unfairness to Shinner in telling only one side of his story—a fault nowhere repeated in his work—seems due to two facts: First, the author is outraged at the dishonoring of the bench by such an occupant. A second reason, not so venial, also appears. Mr. McCrady seems not to be familiar with the extensive manuscripts in the "Public Records," in which Shinner and other royal officers give their detailed account. It is our opinion that, considering the available material, the importance of the subject, the unique and radical legal theories advanced, and the dramatic character of the events, the chapter on the Stamp Act is the one chapter in the book most severely to be criticised.

Perhaps the most painful and delicate incident in the history of the Revolution in South Carolina is Gov. John Rutledge's proposition in May, 1779, that South Carolina should remain neutral during the war. Ramsay and William Gilmore Simms explain that Rutledge used this means of delaying Prevost before the gates of beleaguered Charleston, so as to gain a few hours in which aid might arrive. A family tradition also says that Gov. Rutledge himself, years afterwards, gave this explanation. Mr. McCrady shows conclusively, however, that Rutledge was sincere in the proposition of neutrality. Ramsay, Simms, and the family tradition unite in exonerating Rutledge by dissipating the charge, thus leaving the inference that such a proposal, made in sincerity, would have been discreditable. Mr. McCrady, on the other hand, sees that it was sincere, demonstrates the fact, and maintains that Rutledge was justifiable, provided he stipulated, as seems probable, that South Carolina should be placed in the same condition at the peace as the other

States or colonies. This is a bold position, and ably defended; but we cannot see that it is tenable.

Gov. Rutledge was at first opposed to independence; yet unwittingly he was at various times an instrument in its furtherance, and at last became one of its mainstays. In 1776 he bade the Legislature rejoice at the immortal Declaration; in 1778 he resigned rather than sign a constitution contemplating severance from England; a little later he accepted office as legislator and as chief executive under this constitution; in the spring of 1779 he indignantly scouted the idea of the neutrality of a few militia; a month later, under stress of disaster, he proposed it for the whole State. It appears to us that Gov. Rutledge was yet in a strait betwixt two; and to one in such a mind there were abundant and weighty reasons. Yet Gadsden opposed neutrality with all his tempestuous vigor, threatening death to the perpetrators of what he called this treason; while Col. John Laurens wept at such a message of submission, and refused to be its bearer. The proposal of neutrality must be regarded as the error of a wise and good patriot sorely weighed upon and tossed, but nevertheless a breach of the solemn mutual compact between the States.

An American must have the historic endowment in high degree to write entertainingly and yet impartially the account of the Revolution. The prevailing attitude with us has been to assume aggressively that all the right and reason were on the side of the colonies, and to treat the British as the outer, unconsidered world. In as fine a spirit of candor and with as true an insight as have ever been applied to the subject, Mr. McCrady performs his difficult task. He maintains that there were, especially in South Carolina, two sides to the question between the colonies and the mother country—between, we may even say, one half of the Americans and the other half. The reader is surprised at the absence of Chauvinism. In the light of subsequent events there are some things connected with the history of the Revolution in South Carolina which have been harshly criticised. Mr. McCrady hews to the line with an instinct for truth-telling that nothing can de-

ter. Nowhere can one discover so well the true state of opinion in the three southernmost revolting colonies as in these volumes.

In two respects Mr. McCrady deserves special honor: First, for the acknowledgment which he has compelled of the work of the partisan leaders of South Carolina and the adjacent regions, the significance of which, in the general course of the Revolution and its results, has never been recognized; and, secondly, for the justice he does the loyalists, or Tories. But for the fact that Marion, Sumter, Cleveland, Shelby, and others, by their voluntary, unpaid prowess, without for a long time recognition or aid from any government, completely arrested Lord Cornwallis's movement north in the latter part of 1780 and the early part of 1781, as ordered by Clinton, there remains little doubt that Washington would have been crushed as between the closing jaws of a vise. As our author points out, the plan of the British for terminating the Revolution was the same as that by which, eighty-five years later, Sherman and Grant closed upon Lee and crushed him. Well may the *Outlook* say that Mr. McCrady has put the Revolution in such a light that its history must be rewritten.

The bulk and substance of Mr. McCrady's work forces the question of his standing among American historical writers. The fact that he treats of a single State places him in the second class as to subject-matter. His gifts for his work place him in the first. That is to say, he is of the best type of those historians of States who understand also the national history and comprehend its relationship to their subject. Excelling Bancroft in accuracy, Schouler in style, and McMaster in fair-mindedness, he does not suffer by comparison. A South Carolinian who can give credit to the traitor Charles Lee, where credit is due, condemn the idol Moultrie where he is wrong, and hold fairly the scales for the unfortunate Benjamin Lincoln has in truth received his pen from the fingers of his mistress, Clio.

D. D. WALLACE.

Wofford College, South Carolina.